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Nehemiah, were a blank from the restoration of the temple¹³ to the time of Alexander, and there end. The “seventy weeks” of Daniel, to the predicted fall of Antiochus Epiphanes, whatever *terminus a quo* be taken for Dan. 9, 25, are from fifty to seventy years too long; for the Christian interpretation, which finds its *ad quem* at the birth or at the death of Christ,¹⁴ they are not long enough by a hundred years or more. The Talmudic chronology in *Seder Olam Rabbah* 28, which makes the seventy weeks stretch from the first destruction of the temple to the second¹⁵ (seventy years the temple lay in ruins, it stood after it was rebuilt four hundred and twenty years), is in the same case: its four hundred and ninety years are by our chronology a hundred and sixty-six years too short.¹⁶ Even if the Jews had had more accurate knowledge of dates in the Persian and Greek periods than they possessed, chronology could never be allowed to contradict the sure word of prophecy.

The fact that four hundred and ninety years bring us, according to *our* reckoning, only to 96 B.C. does not therefore militate against the intention of the genealogy to bring them down to the birth of Christ; and it can at least be said that in measuring them as a whole by fourteen generations the author did not involve himself in a whole series of intermediate conflicts with ascertained dates such as appear in the more detailed chronology of the *Seder Olam*.

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THE MEANING OF JOHN XVI, 8-11

Καὶ ἐλθὼν ἐκεῖνος ἐλέγει τὸν κόσμον περὶ ἀμαρτίας καὶ περὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ περὶ κρίσεως· περὶ ἀμαρτίας μὲν, ὅτι οὐ πιστεύουσιν εἰς ἐμέ· περὶ δικαιοσύνης δὲ, ὅτι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα ὑπάγω καὶ οὐκέτι θεωρεῖτε με· περὶ δὲ κρίσεως, ὅτι ὁ ἀρχῶν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου κέκριται.

In all the English versions except the Rheims New Testament of 1582 δικαιοσύνη in this passage is translated ‘righteousness.’ The

¹³ In our chronology 516 B.C.

¹⁴ Or the destruction of Jerusalem, or even the war under Hadrian.

¹⁵ In our dates, 586 B.C. to 70 A.D.

¹⁶ In a later chapter (30) the *Seder Olam* specifies: for the duration of Persian rule after the restoration of the temple 34 years; for the dominion of the Greeks, 180; Asmonaeans 103; Herod and his successors 103, or 420 years in all; which with the 70 of the exile make 490.

Rheims translators, who based their work on the Vulgate, wrote 'justice' wherever they found *iustitia* in the Latin text before them;¹ and hence *δικαιοσύνη* in verses 8 and 10 is rendered 'justice.' Whichever way the word is translated, John 16, 8-10 probably conveys no definite meaning whatever to most readers of the English Bible.

The commentators agree in taking *δικαιοσύνη* in the sense of 'righteousness,' understanding it as the opposite of *ἀμαρτία*. The Paraclete will convict the world, i.e., all those who are alienated from God and opposed to Christ, concerning the three "cardinal elements in the determination of man's spiritual state."² Or, as a more recent commentator puts it, sin, righteousness, and judgment are among the things with which the Christians had chiefly to deal in the conflict with their opponents. In regard to these the Paraclete will deliver authoritative pronouncements and maintain the cause of the disciples against the world.³ What then is meant by righteousness here? Westcott understands it in the widest sense: "In Christ was the one absolute type of righteousness; from him a sinful man must obtain righteousness."⁴ Meyer, B. Weiss, and others refer it to the righteousness or moral perfection of Jesus.⁵ His departure from the earth and presence with the Father are the proof of his righteousness.⁶

The present writer believes that another and a better interpretation of John 16, 8-11 can be given. The office of the Paraclete, according to the Fourth Gospel, is the twofold one of convicting the world and of guiding the disciples into all the truth. In the verses quoted above the first part of the Paraclete's function is described, namely that of convicting the world. *Ἐλέγχειν* means properly to convince or bring home something to one; often, as in the present case, it signifies to confute or to convict. *Δικαιοσύνη* in the LXX and in the New Testament has two closely related meanings — 'righteousness' or

¹ The Vulgate renders *δικαιοσύνη* by *iustitia* everywhere except in Acts 17, 31 and Rom. 8, 10. In Rev. 22, 11, where the best manuscripts read *iustitiam faciat*, the text used by the Rheims translators, like the standard edition of the Vulgate (1592), had *iustificetur*.

² Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John* (1900), p. 228. It should be noted that the Paraclete is not the disciples' comforter. He is God's advocate in the world on behalf of the truth, just as Christ is the believers' advocate in the presence of the Father (cf. 1 John 2, 1).

³ Walter Bauer in Lietzmann's *Handbuch zum N. T.*, II, ii (1912), p. 149.

⁴ Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

⁵ Cf. Meyer, *Commentary on the N. T., Gospel of John* (Eng. tr.) II (1881), p. 263; B. Weiss in Meyer's *Kommentar, Johannes-Evangelium*, 8th ed. (1893), pp. 523 f.

⁶ Euthymius Zigabenus says: *δικαίου γάρ γνώρισμα τὸ πορεύεσθαι πρὸς τὸν Θεόν καὶ συνέιναι αὐτῷ*.

‘moral excellence,’ and ‘justification’ or ‘acquittal.’⁷ The word occurs only here in the Fourth Gospel, and in view of the context it seems to be used in the forensic sense of justification or acquittal.⁸ *Kρίσις* takes its color from the context. It properly means ‘judgment,’ but sometimes, as in the passage before us, it denotes adverse judgment or condemnation.

The ἔλεγξις which the Paraclete is to effect at his coming will be threefold (*περὶ ἀμαρτίας καὶ περὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ περὶ κρίσεως*), and in each case the world will be convicted. It will be brought to recognize three things by the power of the Paraclete: First, that it has sinned because it has not believed in Christ; second, that believers are justified or acquitted because Christ has gone to the Father to act as their advocate (*παράκλητος*);⁹ and third, that evil has been condemned because the ruler of this world (the devil) has been condemned. The whole context is forensic. ‘*Ἀμαρτία, δικαιοσύνη, καὶ κρίσις*’ are contrasted with one another, as the particles *μὲν . . . δὲ . . . δὲ* show; but there is no special emphasis on the contrast between *ἀμαρτία* and *δικαιοσύνη*. The sin of the world in not believing in Christ, the justification, or acquittal, of believers through the advocacy of Christ in heaven, and the condemnation of evil in the person of the devil, are the three points of the contrast.

The justification, or acquittal, here mentioned is not justification by faith, as in the Epistles of Paul, though his use of *δικαιοσύνη* to denote the sinner’s acquittal was no doubt familiar to the author of the Fourth Gospel. It is rather the Johannine form of the doctrine of justification, according to which the believer is justified, or acquitted of his sins, through the pleading of Christ as his advocate in the presence of the Father in heaven. The Fourth Evangelist, like the Apostle Paul, expresses by means of a forensic figure the Christian’s experience of forgiveness.

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⁷ On the meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* see J. H. Ropes, “‘Righteousness’ and ‘The Righteousness of God’ in the Old Testament and in St. Paul,” in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, xxii (1903), pp. 211 ff.

⁸ *Δικαιοσύνη* occurs three times in the First Epistle of John (2,29; 3, 7-10), and in each case with the verb *ποιεῖν* (צִדְקָה עֲשָׂה or צִדְקָה פָּעַל).

⁹ Cf. 1 John 2, 1. According to Rom. 8, 26f. the Spirit makes intercession in behalf of the saints.